

REMARKS:

Applicant has carefully reviewed the Examiner's comments in the Office Action and has prepared the following response.

Claims 1-9 are pending. Turning to the issues raised in the Office Action, claims 1, 2, and 5 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ravenel (U.S. Patent No. 3,531,234, hereinafter "Ravenel"). Claims 3, 4 and 8 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ravenel in view of Kawasaki (U.S. Patent No. 6,250,269), and also in view of Konno (U.S. Patent No. 4,848,284). Claims 6, 7, and 9 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ravenel in view of Nakayama (U.S. Patent No. 6,748,913). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection in view of the following comments, and all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

With respect to claim 1, there is provided a rocker arm system having a rocker shaft that is "oriented to have a rotational axis substantially perpendicular to a rotational axis of the camshaft". This feature is not taught in the prior art. Specifically, Ravenel teaches a camshaft revolving about an axis ZZ, a valve translating along an axis UU, a rocker shaft rotating about an axis XX, and a pushrod translating along an axis YY. (Ravenel, Fig. 1, Col. 2, 30-40). Thus, to teach the claimed invention, axis XX would have to be perpendicular to axis ZZ. However, Ravenel further teaches that "the proper orientation ... is obtained when the axis YY (perpendicular to ZZ) is also perpendicular in the space to XX." (Col. 2, 48-52). Thus, Applicant avers that axis XX cannot be perpendicular to axis ZZ, despite the Examiner's assertion. Furthermore, Ravenel continues to teach that "the above-defined requirements are met by taking a **plane P₂ containing the axis ZZ** ... and selecting the axis XX at right angles to P₁ so that this **axis XX will be parallel to P₂**." (Col. 2, 72 – Col. 3, 4). Additionally, Figure 4 is a cross sectional view looking into the cam shaft 20. Applicant avers that the fact that the rocker shafts are visible from this angle indicates that they are parallel to cam shaft 20. The cited reference therefore fails to teach the claimed invention, and claim 1 is therefore believed to be in condition for allowance.

With respect to the remaining dependent claims, without conceding the Examiner's position, claims 2-9 are believed to be allowable based on the dependency from claim 1.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that the claims are patentable over the prior art and the application is in a condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests an early notice of allowance. The Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned for any reason which would help advance the instant application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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